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General Hans von Seeckt: Reformer of the *Reichswehr*

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When the Great War erupted in Europe in 1914, the parties involved imagined a quick war, believing that the troops would be home for Christmas. At the onset of war, the Germans initiated the Schlieffen Plan, which called for a highly mobile right wing to travel through Belgium and northern Europe and encircle Paris, while the left wing fixed the Allied forces in Eastern France. Had this plan worked perfectly, it would have quickly eliminated France from the war and allowed Germany to focus on its Eastern Front. Modifications to the plan which weakened the right wing and the lack of mechanized infantry, however, hindered its successful execution and the plan ultimately failed. In response, the German and allied armies refocused their plans on maintaining land already gained and outflanking the enemy, resulting in a line running south from the North Sea to Switzerland. As both sides promptly fortified their positions along this line, trench warfare quickly ensued on the Western Front.

Trench warfare was a type of positional warfare which resulted from a lack of mobility and an abundance of firepower. The conflict developed into a war of attrition in which artillery and machine-guns became the chief weapons employed. As there was no room for any maneuver except a frontal assault, the warring nations were forced to send wave after wave of soldiers into no man's land, directly at the enemy's heavily fortified position. As the war carried on, soldiers and civilians continued to die as each nation attempted to drain the enemy of its resources. This resulted in an astronomical number of casualties, which the involved nations could no longer deem acceptable.

As a consequence of this bloody stalemate, each side developed new tactics and technologies to end the horrific violence. Some of these measures, such as poisonous gases and rolling artillery barrages, were aimed at suppressing enemy artillery and forcing enemy

soldiers to evacuate their trenches. Others, such as tanks and infiltration tactics, restored mobility to the battlefield. Troops who managed to break through enemy defenses were able to continue the attack, bypassing enemy strongpoints and leaving them for follow-up forces.¹ The overarching goal was to create a weaker enemy position that the attacking infantry could capture with more acceptable casualties.

During the spring of 1918, the Germans initiated their last offensive on the Western Front: the Ludendorff Offensive. During this offensive, the troops clearly demonstrated what infiltration tactics could accomplish by quickly gaining miles of territory. The Germans, however, were unable to capitalize on their gains for two main reasons. First, the hungry troops often stopped the assault after capturing Allied points in order to rest and take advantage of the supplies.² Second, the advancing troops moved more quickly than the rest of the army and thus could not maintain contact, resulting in a lack of support from the rear. The Allied forces eventually stopped the offensive and, in turn, broke through the German front and forced a diplomatic end to the Great War.

The conditions of peace established at Versailles were especially restrictive for the German military, which was forced to limit its armed forces to 100,000 men. In addition, these men could not be conscripted and were required to serve a lengthy term of enlistment (twelve years for enlisted men, or twenty five for officers). The Allies imposed these long terms of enlistment with the goal of preventing Germany from training a substantial army, but instead it resulted in the creation of a highly trained officer corp. Enlisted men received years of training, making them highly capable. Also, the fact that the treaty abolished conscription ensured that only those dedicated to the service of Germany actually enlisted, infusing the *Reichswehr* with

zeal. The treaty also dictated the organization of the army and navy, prohibited the creation of an air force, and restricted the production, exportation, and importation of war materials such as tanks, airplanes, artillery, and grenades.³ The Allied powers believed that these severe restrictions would permanently disarm Germany and ensure that it would never again threaten world peace.⁴ From the German perspective, however, the treaty was both detrimental and humiliating, preventing any means of security.

Although the Allied powers intended to maintain the peace after the Great War, the countries involved realized the need to learn from their mistakes in the event of future conflict. The unpredictability of war, however, made drawing relevant conclusions extremely difficult and oftentimes led to ineffective solutions. The French, who saw the folly of attacking en masse during the war, concluded by 1929 that future victors would again occupy heavily fortified positions and use heavy artillery against enemy forces. The resulting Maginot Line—consisting of trenches, machine-gun nests, artillery parks, and other obstacles—epitomized their anticipation of positional warfare. On the other hand, Germany's defeat prompted a more critical analysis of the tactics employed, rendering the idea of reform more acceptable. Many believed that Germany's inability to sustain its losses ultimately led to its defeat, a problem which military thinkers sought to remedy. Among the most prominent figures of this group was the Chief of Staff, General Hans von Seeckt, who proposed reforming the German military doctrine in such a way that the future army would never again be drawn into a stationary war.

As a result of his experiences, Seeckt identified what he believed to be the German tactical failures of the Great War and revised the existing doctrine accordingly, preparing the

German army (*Reichswehr*⁵) for a new mode of war. Seeckt's vision was based primarily on movement and combined arms, which he felt would successfully prevent the recurrence of trench warfare. He also forged relations with the Soviet Union, allowing the disarmed *Reichswehr* to gain access to equipment otherwise forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles. As a whole, these doctrinal reforms and political maneuvers created a formidable, apolitical weapon with which future generations could wage effective war. Ultimately, Seeckt facilitated the successful development and implementation of tactical reform within the *Reichswehr*, precipitating the transition from a war of position to a war of movement; his attention to leadership, terrain, and combined arms transformed the army into a capable, modern tool and for this reason Seeckt emerged as one of the most influential military leaders in the interwar period.

Given his position of *Chef der Heeresleitung* (Commander-in-Chief of the *Reichswehr*), Seeckt has been a focal point for investigators. Although their arguments reflect both military and political perspectives, they usually address the same question: how was Germany able to rebuild its armed forces while operating under the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles? Robert Citino argues that Seeckt was instrumental in the 1920s in creating a doctrine that the later German government (the Third Reich) used as the foundation for *Blitzkrieg*.⁶ Citino, however, does not believe that Seeckt was preparing Germany for an imminent war. Similarly, Matthias Strohn contends that Seeckt's reforms were essential in rebuilding the German military, but his intent was to create a force specifically to defend Germany in this vulnerable time.⁷ Contrarily, Macgregor Knox asserts that Seeckt rebuilt the *Reichswehr* with the goal of waging war to regain Germany's status in Europe.⁸ Knox believes that Germany—and Seeckt—

were indeed preparing for a war with a target already selected. Eric D. Weitz and Erich Eyck examine the *Reichswehr's* role in stabilizing the Weimar Republic and thus consider the role of Seeckt. To scholars such as these, Seeckt was critical in his dealings with the Weimar Republic and instrumental in creating a stable *Reich*.⁹ Still, there are others who investigate Seeckt's clandestine dealings with Russia, such as Hans W. Gatzke and George W.F. Hallgarten. These scholars assert that Seeckt was the mastermind behind the military relations with Russia which provided Germany access to vital military experience and hardware.¹⁰ Despite the fact that these arguments are sound, they lack unity.

Although this study provides analysis from a military perspective, it offers a more complete picture of Seeckt's role in the *Reichswehr* both militarily and politically. This paper concludes that, from an examination of his training manuals and field maneuver observations, evidence of his dealings with Russia, and attention to similarities later visible in *Truppenführung*, Seeckt successfully effected military reform during the interwar period amidst notable political instability. These changes would create a mobile and efficient German army, capable of avoiding the horrors of the previous war.

When the Great War began, Colonel Seeckt, the chief of staff to the III Army Corps, was stationed on the Western Front near Belgium and France. Here, early in 1915, he implemented a counter-attack against the French around Soissons, which laid the cornerstone for his reputation within the *Deutsches Heer* (Army of Germany). A few months later, Seeckt transferred from the III Army Corps to the 11th Army, where he acted as that army's chief of staff on the Eastern Front. Here, the *Deutsches Heer* not only achieved one of its greatest victories of the war—the Gorlice campaign— but also gained control of Serbia.¹¹ Germany

owes both of these triumphs to Seeckt, for he personally composed the plans with which Germany operated. In the spring of 1916, the Russians launched what might have been their greatest feat of the war—the Brusilov Offensive—against which Seeckt conducted an effective mobile defense.¹² In December 1916, on the Russian-Romanian Front, Seeckt's plans allowed the *Deutsches Heer* to capture Bucharest, which, in effect, eliminated Romania from the conflict. Seeckt was then assigned to Turkey, in December 1917, where he was tasked with preventing the dissolution of the Turkish army.¹³ When the German General Staff was abolished after the war, the *Truppenamt* (Troops Office) was established in its place.¹⁴ General Seeckt was selected to lead the *Truppenamt* from 1919 to 1920 and rose to the position of *Chef der Heeresleitung* (Commander-in-Chief), occupying this role until 1926.¹⁵

Although some contemporary generals argued that Seeckt's aptitude for obtaining quick and decisive victories should have earned him a deployment to the Western Front instead of to Turkey; his assignment to Turkey was crucial to the evolution of the *Reichswehr*.¹⁶ If Seeckt had indeed been on the Western Front at the end of the war, his reputation would more than likely have been marred by Germany's humiliating defeat. In addition, Seeckt's assignment to the Eastern Front was instrumental in shaping the ideas that he later implemented in the *Reichswehr*. During the Great War, Seeckt avoided the stagnation of trench warfare on the Western Front and instead consistently participated in campaigns dominated by mobility.¹⁷ Within these campaigns, he repeatedly saw how smaller units who possessed superior leadership, training, and weaponry were capable of defeating vastly larger forces.¹⁸

As Commander-in-Chief of the *Reichswehr*, Seeckt did not delay in analyzing his experiences and drafting plans for reform. The goal of any future army, he concluded, should

be to eliminate the opposing forces before they mobilized their entire might; this would be best achieved with highly mobile, well trained troops.¹⁹ Seeckt believed that the lack of maneuverability in the Great War was due largely to the unprecedented size of the involved armies.²⁰ To remedy this, he suggested deploying smaller armies. Citino puts forward the best description of how Seeckt envisioned the *Reichswehr*, writing that “the army of the future needed only to be large enough to fight off an enemy surprise attack. Its strength would lay in its mobility, aided by a large contingent of cavalry, well-conditioned infantry, a full complement of motorized and/or mechanized units, light machine guns, and mobile artillery.”²¹

Because of his influence, it is critical to examine the ideology with which Seeckt operated. Given that the Nazi Party assumed control of the *Reichswehr*, it is worth questioning whether General Seeckt forged an army specifically for the Nazis to utilize in their quest to purify Europe. Although this theory seems plausible, it is highly unlikely given Seeckt’s stated view of the army’s role. During the short-lived *Kapp Putsch* in 1920, for example, both the participants in the attempted coup and the government of the Weimar Republic looked to the *Reichswehr* for support. Many commanding officers—including Seeckt—assured both sides of the *Reichswehr*’s neutrality. Scholars from Erich Eyck to Louis L. Snyder to Eric D. Weitz argue that Seeckt’s non-involvement was a direct result of his discontent with the Republic, as indicated by Seeckt’s famous statement, “The *Reichswehr* does not fire on *Reichswehr*.”²² Seeckt was likely exposed to the conservative German National People’s Party (DNVP) ideology as a result of his upbringing, and, as Weitz argues, he was never a stark defender of the Republic.²³ Additionally, some of the officers of the *Reichswehr* did belong to the DNVP. This, however, was likely not the basis of Seeckt’s inaction during the *Putsch*, rather his inactivity

came from his love for the *Reichswehr*. During the first half of the Weimar Republic, the state was in turmoil; left wing revolutionaries attempted to incite a communist revolution akin to the Russian Revolution of 1917 while right wing paramilitary groups—such as the *Freikorps* (Free Corps)— attacked both left wing sympathizers and Jews alike.²⁴ To make matters worse, the army lost its unifying element with the loss of the Kaiser in 1918. Cognizant of this atmosphere, Seeckt realized the importance of preserving neutrality during the *Kapp Putsch*. His statement reflected the belief that, if the *Reichswehr* was to openly fight with its own members, it would shatter its already fragile unity, serving neither the purpose of the *Reichswehr* nor the purpose of Germany.

As Harold J. Gordon Jr. clearly argues, the *Heeresleitung* (Army Command) “considered the defense of Germany against external foes the primary mission of the army and devoted most of its energy toward the creation of a force which would hope to accomplish this mission. . . . Seeckt believed the army should not be implemented in civil affairs.”²⁵ He also believed that the military should “only act at home if the government or the Reich was threatened. He wanted to avoid civil war and saw conflicts at home a job for the local authorities or security police.”²⁶ With this in mind, it is rather clear that Seeckt refrained from involvement in the aforementioned *Kapp Putsch* because he believed that it did not directly endanger the *Reich* or the Weimar Republic, and thus desired to keep the *Reichswehr* separate from this event, allowing the army to display a necessary degree of neutrality.

Seeckt again demonstrated this philosophy around the time of the Hitler *Putsch* (or the Beer Hall *Putsch*). Originally, Hitler had planned to kidnap Gustav Ritter von Kahr, a right wing conservative, on November 4, 1923. Due to added security, however, this plan was cancelled.²⁷

Four days later, on November 8, 1923, Hitler initiated his failed Beer Hall *Putsch* in Bavaria. Two days after the canceled kidnapping plan, Seeckt circulated a memorandum within the *Reichswehr*, stating that a soldier should be obedient, regardless of the faction in control of the government. In response to questions regarding the unity of the *Reichswehr*, Seeckt affirmed that, “it is our life interest to allay these doubts, so that we can keep away from the Army the party struggles, which are consuming all other groups in Germany, so that we can serve only impartial, natural requirements, and not to be turned off from the course by the intrigues of any political direction.”²⁸ He continued his argument, asserting that “an army, which is united, and remains obedient, cannot be conquered and is the strongest factor in the State. An army, which has become mixed up in politics, will break in the hour of danger.”²⁹ In addition, Seeckt made the recommendation that soldiers who desire to become entangled in politics should be immediately dismissed from the *Reichswehr*.³⁰ It is in this document that Seeckt cemented his ideology: political impartiality is essential for soldiers whose primary objective is serving the state. Therefore, despite his nationalistic personal views, it is highly improbable that Seeckt was acting under Adolf Hitler’s orders or creating a tool for the Nazis. Seeckt was simply attempting to build an effective army, with which any future government could confidently wage war.

The successful creation of such an army required a vision. To this end, Seeckt authored a number of articles, pamphlets and manuals aimed at individual branches of the *Reichswehr*; among the most prominent were: *Führung und Gefecht der verbundenen Waffen* (Leadership and Combined Arms Combat, or *F.u.G.*),³¹ *Ausbildung der Schützengruppe* (Training of the Rifle Squad, or *A.d.S.*),³² *Einzel Ausbildung am L.M.G.: Ausbildung der L.M.G. Gruppe* (Individual

Training with the Light Machine Gun: The Training of the L.M.G. Section, or *A.L.M.G.*),³³ and *Ausbildungsvorschrift für die Infanterie* (Training Regulations for the Infantry, or *A.V.I.*).³⁴

Although *Führung und Gefecht der verbundenen Waffen* (Leadership and Combined Arms Combat or *F.u.G.*), the first part published in 1921 and the second in 1923, included some innovations, it did not drastically alter the tactics and doctrine used by the *Deutsches Heer* during the previous war. Instead, this manual focused on the reality of the situation that Germany faced during the interwar period. *F.u.G.* was crafted to suit the *Reichswehr's* needs—focusing both on defense and offense, allowing the military to prepare for future engagements while still operating under the limitations of the Treaty of Versailles. With respect to defensive tactics, Seeckt introduced a new mode of defense—the delaying defense—which was arguably the most advantageous to the *Reichswehr*. Seeckt believed that this would enable the army to impede the advance of its invader until Germany mobilized a strong counterforce or until the League of Nations forced negotiations.³⁵ Seeckt also examined defense in a war of position, desiring to prepare the *Reichswehr* for any situation that may arise.³⁶ Though the inclusion of positional tactics may not seem wholly innovative, Seeckt's capacity for foresight is undeniable. Seeckt adapted the concept of positional defense to suit modern needs, including sections on anti-air and anti-tank maneuvers to reflect advances in technology.³⁷

With respect to offensive tactics, Seeckt advocated the continuation of *Stosstruppen* tactics (Shock Troop tactics, a form of infiltration tactics), yet with considerable emphasis on combined arms.³⁸ During the previous war, the Germans used this strategy during the Ludendorff Offensive. Seeckt realized their importance in preventing stagnation in a future war and therefore cemented them in the *Reichswehr's* doctrine. Originally designed to increase

mobility during trench warfare, *Stosstruppen* tactics afforded individual leaders the power to seize opportunities to push the attack forward, preferring to bypass enemy strong points (which were left for reinforcements wielding heavier weapons).³⁹ The core of these tactics was the utilization of independent squads, a feature that Seeckt emphasized heavily in *F.u.G.*⁴⁰ More importantly; Seeckt outlined the benefits of coordinating infantry advances with machine guns and artillery, which would provide vital protection for attacking soldiers.⁴¹ Given Germany's vulnerability, however, the inclusion of offensive tactics in *F.u.G.* seems impractical; more attention to defensive strategies would have better served Germany's immediate needs. Seeckt's anticipation of future conflict served two purposes: it preserved the offensive spirit of German troops (thus keeping morale high, something which Seeckt saw as essential given the long terms of enlistment) and enabled the training of independent leaders from which the *Reichswehr* would later gather its strength.

Through *F.u.G.*, Seeckt did not ignore the elements involved in the Great War but instead attempted to refine those elements. Above all, Seeckt aimed to avoid the stagnation and devastation of trench warfare and translate this mentality to his troops. Although the *Reichswehr* doctrine as of 1921 required training in positional warfare, Citino made the observation that "occasionally *Stosstrupp* exercises were held in practice trenches (*Übungsschützengraben*) that still existed on the various training grounds, but so strong was the prejudice against trench warfare in Seeckt's military thought. . . that most unit commanders shied away from such exercises so as not to appear to be in contravention of the new manual."⁴² This description indicates a successful transition from theory to practice, demonstrating Seeckt's ability to effectively implement his reforms.

Following the publication of the first part of *F.u.G.*, Seeckt produced *Ausbildung der Schützengruppe* (Training of the Rifle Squad, or *A.d.S.*) in 1921, a brief manual discussing the smallest operational group within the *Reichswehr*: the squad. *A.d.S.* defined the squad as a group consisting of one leader and up to seven riflemen, capable of immediate action based on a leader's order, and bound together in life and death by the bond of brotherhood.⁴³ It also laid the foundation for the use of terrain, the development of independently thinking men, and the utilization of combined arms. In terms of terrain, *A.d.S.* instructed troops to maximize the use of cover while advancing. Here, Seeckt declared that the spade (entrenching tool), even when employed for short halts, can greatly increase the protection granted by the landscape.⁴⁴ Using the landscape granted not only protection from enemy bullets, but also from enemy observation. With the advent of new technologies such as airplanes (and through them, aerial reconnaissance), the ability to hide troops became increasingly harder. Therefore, Seeckt's focus on the use of terrain was both a way to protect the soldier's well-being and to maintain the element of surprise. *A.d.S.* also mandated that every squad leader be informed of the larger operational goal because he "will oftentimes be obliged to act upon his own initiative. . . during the course of the engagement."⁴⁵ Likely due to his experiences on the Eastern Front, Seeckt believed that "quick decision and clear desire of the leaders guarantee to us the advantage in an encounter."⁴⁶ He furthermore contended that leaders were capable of taking advantage of unexpected situations and that this skill required practice. As a result, *A.d.S.* established guidelines for training soldiers—from privates to officers—in making independent decisions. For example, riflemen were to advance under cover and hold fire until they were within an effective range, yet they were given permission to open fire if they saw an

“exceptionally favorable target” or if “the enemy is suddenly encountered.”⁴⁷ This ~~also~~ offered further evidence for Seeckt’s belief in combined arms tactics, as riflemen would supplement machine-gun fire by hitting targets against which the machine-guns were ineffective.⁴⁸ Seeckt again hinted at combined arms in *A.d.S.* by requiring all infantrymen to understand the importance of aircraft and tanks, both friendly and hostile.⁴⁹ This understanding would enable different branches to maximize each other’s strengths while minimizing their own weaknesses. This emphasis on the combined arms between the infantry and the machine-gun units made *A.d.S.* innovative for its time. Although *A.d.S.* was a short manual, it established the foundation for Seeckt’s focus on independent leaders, effective use of terrain, and combined arms upon which he expanded in *A.V.I.*

In conjunction with *A.d.S.*, Seeckt produced *Einzel Ausbildung am L.M.G.: Ausbildung der Schützengruppe* (Individual Training with the Light Machine Gun: The Training of the L.M.G. Section, or *A.L.M.G.*) in 1921, believing that “the light machine-gun is the most important weapon which the Infantry Company possesses for the conduct of fire battle” and he created this manual to effectively train infantrymen in this weapon.⁵⁰ Machine-guns were not new by the time of the Great War; they had existed since 1861 when Richard Gatling patented his famous Gatling Gun. They were generally viewed as defensive weapons due to their high rate of fire and capacity, capable of “mowing down” hundreds of men as they attempted to cross no man’s land. As *Stosstruppen* tactics evolved, however, machine-guns changed in both their physical construction and battlefield role, becoming lighter and easier to wield. Since these lighter variants were easier to move and could be manned by fewer men, they assumed a different role than their heavier counterparts. Light machine-guns were able to travel with the

infantry and thus provide better support and coordinated fire, creating temporary fire superiority, which was essential in any frontal assault. Continuing plans put forth in *A.d.S.*, Seeckt explained that close coordination between light machine-gunners and riflemen must be taught from the beginning of a soldier's training. Light machine-gunners initially trained as riflemen before receiving specialized instruction and then returned to train alongside the rifle squad, reinforcing the idea of combined arms.⁵¹ According to *A.L.M.G.*, the light machine-gun section was to consist of a commanding officer, four light machine-gunners and up to three riflemen, which improved the ability of the squad to provide support for the infantry.⁵² As with the infantry, the light machine-gun section was also trained to utilize the terrain, thus minimizing its presence.⁵³ During the Great War, machine-guns were too heavy for individual soldiers to transport; with the advent of the light machine-gun, however, novel tactical strategies arose. Thus, Seeckt used *A.L.M.G.* to reinforce his ideas in what he viewed as the most important section of the *Reichswehr*.

Despite the innovation exhibited within the three previously discussed manuals, their highly specialized and diverse nature made them less effective than Seeckt's next publication, which succeeded in combining his theories into one comprehensive manual.

Ausbildungsvorschrift für die Infanterie (Training Regulations for the Infantry, or *A.V.I.*) was intended to be read by the majority of the *Reichswehr*, including both commanding officers and privates, and was arguably his most influential doctrine (given the broad audience that it reached). *F.u.G.*, for example, stressed *Stosstruppen* tactics and combined arms, but it was *A.V.I.* that presented these ideas as they applied to smaller groups (platoon or smaller). While Seeckt dedicated half of his discussion in *F.u.G.* to engagements based on position, he devoted

only two pages to this topic in *A.V.I.* While this may have been to avoid redundancy, it is more likely that Seeckt recognized the growing inadequacy of positional tactics and adjusted his doctrine to reflect this. Concerning *A.d.S.* and *A.L.M.G.*, Seeckt transplanted his ideas regarding flexibility, terrain, and combined arms and further developed them, using this as a platform to cultivate a highly mobile army. This manual was simultaneously similar to and different from the manuals that came before it. It was within its pages that Seeckt articulated his thoughts and created an effective doctrine—based on *Stosstruppen* tactics, terrain, and combined arms—that would serve the *Reichswehr*, and later the *Wehrmacht*, decidedly well in the Second World War.

Seeckt's discussion in *A.V.I.* returned to *Stosstruppen* tactics, but only as it applied to mobile warfare. The heart of *Stosstruppen* tactics was preserved in the modern doctrine, which underscored the importance of flexible commanding officers. Leaders were required to achieve predetermined objectives, but the course taken to reach these objectives was left unspecified. Though seemingly peculiar given the normally rigid structure of the military, it made troops more flexible and thus more efficient. This need for independent action, however, required a clearer understanding of the goals outlined by superiors. *A.V.I.* states that when forces meet, commanders must act promptly and confidently, even though they often must make decisions "without knowing the facts."⁵⁴ During Seeckt's years as Commander-in-Chief, he was a strong proponent of brief, yet clear, verbal orders.⁵⁵ He believed that issuing commands in this manner resulted in a high degree of clarity and also enabled subordinates to ask relevant questions to improve their understanding. He also recommended that commanders ride with the advance guard, allowing them to make their own observations of the terrain. These

observations, when combined with the reports of patrols, would grant a clearer assessment of the situation and allow the officer to act decisively and competently.⁵⁶

Seeckt's discussion of terrain in *A.V.I.* differs from his previous manuals, reflecting the transition between positional and mobile warfare. While terrain is of vital importance in a defensive position, its advantages had not yet been adapted for offensive maneuvers. Still, Seeckt envisioned the use of terrain in the advance. As mentioned previously, commanding officers were urged to personally observe the terrain in order to improve their orders. *A.V.I.* also stated that terrain, in conjunction with the "combat order," should dictate the advancement of troops.⁵⁷ In practice, this meant that the men used the land to limit their exposure to the enemy's line-of-sight, fire, and aerial observation. Seeckt also expanded his previous discussion of the spade, believing that it was able to improve the defense of the troops while attacking. This contradicted earlier manuals—which claimed that digging in decreased the momentum of the attack—while Seeckt asserted that the spade would increase survivability and in no way decrease mobility.⁵⁸ Knowledge of terrain could also be used against the enemy, as commanders could identify avenues through which the enemy would likely advance and position their troops to effectively defend against them.

In addition, *A.V.I.* built on the idea of combined arms, suggesting the formation of mixed *Kampfgruppen* (battle groups) to achieve greater battlefield effect.⁵⁹ During the previous war, some progress had been made in regards to combining artillery fire, machine gun fire, and the infantry, but it was the invention of the light machine-gun which ultimately changed how combined arms worked. Seeckt understood the full potential of this weapon, believing that, with a high rate of fire, long range, and capacity for sustained fire, these powerful tools should

provide covering fire for the infantry.⁶⁰ According to *A.V.I.*, the “execution of the infantry attack is based on the fact that fire and movements of troops are so harmonized that the fire of one unit makes it possible for the other to advance.”⁶¹ In order to provide continued support to the infantry, the manual suggests that light machine-gunners advance in a way akin to leapfrogging: the first unit moves behind the second, which continues to fire, and once into position, the second team moves behind the first.⁶² Overall, Seeckt saw the other branches of the *Reichswehr* as supplemental to the infantry: “The heavy infantry arms [machine-guns, artillery, and trench mortars] must break down the local resistance for the infantry which they are protecting and in the closest cooperation with it, and attack the objectives which threaten it the most.”⁶³ This close coordination of units would produce the greatest chance of both avoiding trench warfare and, more importantly, victory.

Defining this vision was not sufficient for Seeckt, however, who realized the need to implement his doctrine in the *Reichswehr* as most of the officers were trained in the pre-First World War era. Each fall, the soldiers participated in maneuvers that Seeckt reviewed. The reports which Seeckt wrote during his time as Commander-in-Chief proved instrumental in assessing the direction of the *Reichswehr* in the interwar period. They serve as evidence that Seeckt actively oversaw the implementation of his doctrine in the army.

Seeckt’s 1921 “*Remarks of the German Chief of the Army Command Based on His Inspections*,” here after referred to as “*Remarks, 1921*,” showed his disappointment with the *Reichswehr* for its loose adherence to *F.u.G.*⁶⁴ Seeckt addressed three specific deficiencies in great detail in this *Remarks, 1921*, with additional comments regarding the men. First, he was impressed by neither the education of the non-commissioned officers (NCOs) nor the ability of

officers to convey orders. Due to the poor performance of the NCOs, Seeckt mandated that their education be equal to that of the commissioned officers in the following year.⁶⁵ Second, he was fully dissatisfied with the manner of issuing orders. He remarked that discussions following exercises were oftentimes too lengthy, contending that “long discussions are dull, short ones are effective.”⁶⁶ To remedy this, he recommended that all commanding officers deliver a brief, verbal order that the recipient would then repeat. The subordinate was encouraged to ask questions until he fully understood both the specific order and the overall objective (a suggestion that would later appear in *A.V.I.*).⁶⁷ Last, Seeckt strongly discouraged the use of a map, as commanders should base their orders on their knowledge of the terrain.⁶⁸ He preferred this method as it was often quicker to reference and easier to understand.

Regarding the men, Seeckt noted that the physical fitness of the soldiers was not sufficient, as most arrived tired and weary after a march. He recommended increasing endurance and strength in the coming year, suggesting that soldiers participate in sports during their leisure time; this was also advantageous as the competitive nature of such activity would improve training.⁶⁹ Second, he commented on the enthusiasm of the troops. Seeckt was impressed by their youthful zeal and recommended that commanding officers do everything in their power to maintain this, given the long enlistment period mandated by the Treaty of Versailles.⁷⁰

Seeckt’s last concern in 1921 involved the notion of combined arms. Although he had published *F.u.G.* earlier that year, the troops of the *Reichswehr* did not adhere closely to his doctrine. Seeckt noted that the level of training amongst light machine-gunners was below that of the riflemen, that the “infantry company still neglects its chief weapon, the light machine

gun,”⁷¹ and that weapon specializations (*Waffen-Partikularismus*) had developed in the officer corps. Addressing the first two concerns, Seeckt recommended that the machine-gun units and the infantry merge.⁷² He maintained that this would not only improve the education of machine-gunners, but also provide an opportunity for the infantry to better acquaint themselves with the advantages of the light machine-gun. As for weapon specializations, Seeckt commented that “we must lay greater stress on the training of detachments of combined arms and on making effective, through co-operation, the centralization of the purpose of the maneuver and teaching the troop leaders and the infantry the indisputable time requirement of the other arms, especially the artillery.”⁷³ General Seeckt believed that riflemen equipped with telescopic lenses (snipers), trench mortars, machine-guns, and artillery were all instrumental in aiding the advance of the infantry.⁷⁴ More importantly, Seeckt noted that troops were still employing these weapons in a way representative of positional warfare, not as described in *F.u.G.* He responded to this oversight, stating: “The destructive effect of artillery, which permits weaker infantry to pick the fruits of the victory, can only be executed in movement warfare. . . . Experience in stabilized warfare cannot be made use of in movement warfare.”⁷⁵ Through this comment, Seeckt hoped to make his officers aware of not only the benefits of artillery fire or the capabilities of smaller forces, but also the limitations of relying on previous experience in the Great War. He envisioned a future war being one of movement and was determined to train the *Reichswehr* for this reality despite the resistance he initially encountered.

The following year, General Seeckt again observed the fall maneuvers and reported his comments. The 1922 *Comments* were similar to his previous *Remarks*, as Seeckt criticized the

troops for not adhering to *F.u.G.*, discussed the importance of flexible leaders, and stressed the importance of combined arms. Despite these similar criticisms, he observed progress in different areas. With regards to the general training, Seeckt observed that the individual branches were becoming acquainted with one another, but that the smallest unit—the squad—needed improvement.⁷⁶ Although Seeckt had addressed squad training in *A.d.S.* (published in late 1921), he made several further comments in his 1922 *Comments*. According to these additions, squad leaders were to live with their men to better understand their character and needs. He also calls for the education of leaders in such a way that they become “thinking fighters.”⁷⁷ Along these lines, he reiterated that “the advance guard commander must usually act before he has obtained all information necessary for a correct decision. It is the fate of the advance guard always to cope with an unclarified [*sic*] situation,”⁷⁸ something he referenced in his *Remarks*, 1921 and in *A.d.S.* The 1922 *Comments* also demand continual movement in the field to prevent stalemate. In addition, Seeckt also made a few comments regarding the continued dependence on the map and the lack of entrenching.⁷⁹ With regards to combined arms, Seeckt noticed a clear deficiency in the communication between the infantry and the artillery, leading to numerous accounts of infantry attacks without proper fire support. In turn, this “erroneous withholding of artillery costs infantry blood.”⁸⁰ If there is a lack of artillery, the *Comments* call for the use of the trench mortar to stand in for or supplement artillery fire.⁸¹

The 1922 edition of General Seeckt’s *Comments* addressed many of the same topics that his 1921 *Remarks* introduced: leadership, terrain, and combined arms. His 1922 *Comments*, however, were not as extensive as the previous ones. This suggests that the *Reichswehr* likely succeeded in implementing Seeckt’s suggestions and began advancing toward a mobile warfare

doctrine. It is also worth noting that both *A.d.S.* and *A.L.M.G.* were in circulation for less than a full year before these fall maneuvers occurred. The fact that Seeckt did not mention these manuals in his 1922 *Comments* (like he did with *F.u.G.* the previous year) suggests that the *Reichswehr* attempted, and succeeded, to adhere more closely to these training manuals.

General Seeckt was more critical of the 1923 maneuvers, but the troops continued to show progress in certain areas. Seeckt reported that “good progress has been made in the study of the new Combat and Training Regulations” but warned that this progress must continue.⁸² One plausible reason for Seeckt’s critical nature in his 1923 *Comments* lies in the French occupation of the Ruhr. While the Treaty of Versailles declared this a demilitarized zone, the Allied powers were still permitted to station troops there and on January 11, 1923, French and Belgian troops marched into the Ruhr valley and assumed control.⁸³ During this invasion, the *Reichswehr* did not intervene. Still, this invasion likely reminded Seeckt of Germany’s vulnerability and provoked greater criticism in an attempt to strengthen the *Reichswehr*.

While touring, Seeckt consistently heard commanding officers argue for the use of positional tactics in situations that did not necessitate them. These discussions worried Seeckt, as he believed the army was regressing instead of advancing. To this effect, Seeckt issued the following comment: “Training in movement warfare is the main thing and should not be slighted.”⁸⁴ Seeckt also noted, to his dismay, the lack of hands-on experience with tanks and airplanes during the maneuvers.⁸⁵ Although both tanks and airplanes were used during the Great War, they were relatively primitive at the time. Since the Treaty of Versailles prohibited both an air force and tanks in Germany after the war, the soldiers were unfamiliar with how to

effectively integrate the new, upgraded models in their doctrine. Nevertheless, the *Reichswehr* had been experimenting with the use of “combat wagons” as early as 1921 and incorporated dummy versions into their maneuvers, which were numerically insignificant in 1923.⁸⁶ In response, Seeckt repeated the essence of his manuals and maneuver observations: “Modern means of combat must be allotted or assumed more often.”⁸⁷

During the 1923 maneuvers, Seeckt commented that the commanding officers showed progress with their maneuvers were compared to earlier ones. One of the major flaws that Seeckt observed, however, regarded the evolution of *Stosstruppen* tactics within the officer corps. He found that officers were influenced by the presence of superior officers, which Seeckt felt should be rectified immediately.⁸⁸ He also recommended that fewer intermediate objectives be assigned. Incremental goals, he felt, resulted in less flexibility and weakened morale and momentum (as troops, upon achieving an objective, usually halted to regroup and plan the next course of action.)⁸⁹ Instead, Seeckt suggested designating targets deep within enemy territory, a simple extension of the *Stosstruppen* tactics utilized at the end of the Great War. This enabled the infantry to maintain its momentum instead of preparing for a counter-attack. Still, Seeckt did note definite improvements in his 1923 *Comments*, specifically concerning terrain. The troops, he saw, were adjusting their formations to align more closely to the tactics stressed in his training manuals, particularly *A.V.I.*⁹⁰

The main area of focus of the 1923 *Comments* was combined arms tactics. As a whole, Seeckt remarked that considerable progress had been made compared to previous years, but cooperation with machine-gun units was still flawed.⁹¹ Seeckt noted that, on many occasions, the infantry would advance prior to assuring machine-gun support, or the machine-gunners

would enter combat after the infantry was destroyed.⁹² Although he does mention some problems with the cooperation between the infantry and machine-gun units, Seeckt's main concern was the lack of coordination between the infantry and the artillery. Seeckt simply referred back to his 1922 *Comments* on the matter but made it clear that communication must improve if the infantry is to have sufficient support to accomplish its mission.⁹³ As mentioned previously, Seeckt noticed a bias toward trench warfare among the officers, which he again witnessed in the artillery units. He observed that the artillery were better at executing difficult orders from defensive positions than executing easy orders from offensive ones.⁹⁴ As with the officers, he recommended that the artillery stress mobile warfare tactics. Many of the problems that Seeckt noted in his 1923 *Comments* were of the same category as previous years, yet Seeckt did recognize a degree of progress within the *Reichswehr*. In fact, Seeckt was able to strongly criticize the execution of combined arms tactics because the army had already implemented Seeckt's previous suggestions. As a whole, the 1923 fall maneuvers showcased an imperfect yet capable army, transitioning along the path that Seeckt outlined.

The 1924 *Observations* were even shorter than the 1922 *Comments* and less critical. General Seeckt noted that conferences and orders were now shorter, clearer, and less reliant on maps, suggesting that the *Reichswehr* had succeeded in implementing many of his plans.⁹⁵ He also mentioned that individual arms training was good, but that cooperation between branches could be increased.⁹⁶ Again, he discussed the issue of leadership, but in this edition he criticized not the officers but the umpires. During the maneuvers, senior commanding officers played the role of umpires, assessing and evaluating the results and effectiveness of enemy and friendly actions. They would report enemy activity in a particular area, describe the

findings of friendly reconnaissance, and determine the effect of enemy machine-gun fire on their sector. During this particular year, Seeckt noticed that the umpires tended to restrict the creativity of the leaders. Seeckt commented that this was detrimental, as commanding officers would not fully experience the conditions under which they would operate in a real war.⁹⁷

General Seeckt once again criticized the lack of coordination between branches. As in the previous year, the infantry often sustained heavy casualties due to a lack of coordination. This year, however, Seeckt blamed the machine-gun units for improper execution of movement. He found that, oftentimes, too many machine-gunners moved to a new location, leaving the infantry with insufficient support when an engagement occurred.⁹⁸

The 1924 *Observations* provide a capstone perspective for Seeckt's reform efforts. The work was shorter and briefer, which suggested that in Seeckt's view the *Reichswehr* had made considerable progress. It also indicated the emergence of better trained leaders who were capable and practiced in making independent decisions. Soldiers were also better trained in utilizing terrain while advancing and employing the spade to increase survivability. The branches of the *Reichswehr* were also becoming more proficient in their coordination, despite the fact that there were still problems to address. Though these comments are specific to the 1924 *Observations*, they also reflect the trends of the four previous years. These trends create the image of change that was based on the doctrinal manuals authored by Seeckt. To draw the conclusion that it was Seeckt's manuals alone that precipitated reform within the *Reichswehr*, however, would be inaccurate. Instead, General Seeckt took a proactive approach and personally oversaw the implementation of new doctrine in the *Reichswehr*, documenting his efforts in his *Remarks, Comments, and Observations*.

Although these measures succeeded in reforming the *Reichswehr* on a tactical and operational level, they did not accomplish much in terms of preparing the *Reichswehr* for a future war, because Germany did not possess modern weapons. The Entente Powers, wanting to create a lasting peace, sought to permanently disarm Germany. To this effect, France insisted in 1918 that the Treaty of Versailles be particularly severe. In addition to placing restrictions on the size and composition of the army, the treaty governed the armament, munitions, and materials of Germany. Under Article 168, Section 5, the “manufacture of arms, munitions, or any war material” was restricted to geographical areas approved by the Allied Powers.⁹⁹ The treaty also stated that the “importation into Germany of arms, munitions and war material of every kind” was forbidden and that “the manufacture and the importation into Germany of armoured cars, tanks and all similar constructions suitable for use in war are also prohibited.”¹⁰⁰ These three articles effectively ensured that Germany would not have access to some of the most essential weapons in any future war, and it was these weapons which Seeckt desired to procure for the *Reichswehr* and Germany. As a result, Germany could only examine theory, through publications and observations in other nations. Seeckt, however, firmly believed that these new weapons would prove pivotal and realized the need for firsthand experience. As a result, he sought the means to provide his troops with such an opportunity.

Seeckt’s role in the Russo-German military collaboration, which resulted in access to war materials for Germany, began while he was still a General in the *Deutsches Heer*. Near the end of the Great War, Seeckt befriended the Turkish nationalist, Enver Bey. Bey conducted talks in Moscow with the Russian military (members of the Trotsky circle) on behalf of Seeckt, and by August 1920 the Russians had drafted a proposal: Russia would agree to formally recognize

Germany's 1914 borders if Germany would supply weapons to Turkey. Shortly after this meeting, the *Reichswehr* established *Sondergruppe R* (Special Group R), with the intent of establishing connections between the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA) and the *Reichswehr*, presumably under the recommendation of Seeckt.¹⁰¹ Later, a group consisting of Major Fritz Tschunke, one of Seeckt's trusted agents and representative, Oskar von Niedermayer, a former military attaché to Russia, and Lieutenant-Colonel Schubert traveled to Moscow. Tschunke has the clearest connection to Seeckt, but Niedermayer and Schubert were also likely acting under Seeckt's orders. As Commander-in-Chief of the *Reichswehr*, it is likely that Seeckt had expressed his expectations prior to their meeting in Russia. Eyck makes the argument—which partially explains why connections between these three men and Seeckt are difficult to find—that Seeckt wished to remain as obscure in these Russian-German dealings as possible, despite the fact that he orchestrated them.¹⁰² Through the talks that ensued, the German firm *Gesellschaft zur Förderung Gewerblicher Unternehmungen* (Society for the Encouragement of Commercial Enterprises, or *GEFU*) was established to safeguard the negotiations from foreign intervention, and Major Tschunke was assigned to lead it.¹⁰³

The Russians required Seeckt to personally confirm their deals and at this request Seeckt talked with the Reich Chancellor and Minister of Finance, Dr. Josef Wirth.¹⁰⁴ Before an agreement could be finalized, however, Wirth stepped down from his position as Minister of Finance. The Russians then inquired about active military aid against Poland, a request that Seeckt could not fulfill.¹⁰⁵ These problems temporarily halted the Russo-German collaboration, but on January 17, 1922, Niedermayer returned to Berlin with a possible solution. Karl Radek, a civilian representative of Russia, who arrived with Niedermayer, informed Seeckt that Russia

planned to attack Poland in the spring and requested German aid in rebuilding the Russian war industry. Radek proposed a mutual exchange of military literature which would be used to train the officer corps.¹⁰⁶ On April 16, 1922, Russia (soon to become the Soviet Union) and Weimar Germany signed the Treaty of Rapallo, in which Russia “renounced any claims for reparations from Germany and joined the Reich in a pledge of peace and friendship.”¹⁰⁷ General Seeckt feared for the longevity of the treaty, however, and sought to draft a military agreement with political ramifications. He met with a Russian agent, Rosenblatt (first name unknown) and from these talks established an agreement entitling the *Reichswehr* access to military bases in Russia.¹⁰⁸ In return, Russia received the right to learn German “military culture” through participation in German maneuvers, with a yearly “material reward.”¹⁰⁹ The agreement was finalized on August 11, 1922, in Moscow, through one of Seeckt’s trusted collaborators.¹¹⁰ Most importantly, the procurement of bases on Russian soil allowed the *Reichswehr* to circumvent the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles, granting them the hands-on experience that Seeckt so eagerly sought. As a result, Seeckt was able to translate his reforms from theory to practice, effectively preparing the *Reichswehr* for future conflict.

Through the aforementioned pact, the *Reichswehr* was able to establish three programs in the Soviet Union: Lipetsk, Kama, and Tomka. Lipetsk became operational in May 1925 and was the first of the joint programs. As an aviation school located in Lipetsk, its primary objective was to train pilots and mechanics; it was also used for testing aeronautical equipment and experimenting with new tactics.¹¹¹ The school ran numerous experiments, ranging from the coordination of smoke screens and infantry to the development of pressurized cabins (cockpits) for winter conditions.¹¹² Within the first nineteen months of its operations, sixteen

pilots, forty-five mechanics and forty workers were trained at this school;¹¹³ the following year, twenty pilots (and twenty-four observer pilots) emerged.¹¹⁴ The second program was launched in 1926 as a facility for research involving poisonous gasses in Podsinki (code-named “Tomka”).¹¹⁵ Experiments conducted here investigated methods for dispersing gasses (i.e. by artillery shells, airplanes, and other delivery systems) and decontaminating gassed regions. The last major testing zone, a tank school located in Kazan (code-named “Kama”), became operational in 1929.¹¹⁶ Officers who attended the tank school received a thorough education in both the theoretical and the applied science of tank warfare; courses treated topics such as tank mobility in certain terrain, the estimation of distance to a target, and the calculation of ballistic properties.¹¹⁷ Though both the *Reichswehr* and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA) benefited from the knowledge acquired through the experiments at these locations, they were not funded equally. While Lipetsk and Kama were primarily paid for by the Germans, Tomka was a joint program, and each side bore roughly the same financial burden.¹¹⁸ The fact that the *Reichswehr* was willing to fund the creation, maintenance, and supply of such schools shows how vital these establishments were to the Germans.

As mentioned previously, General Seeckt was highly concerned with maintaining secrecy in negotiations between the *Reichswehr* and the RKKA. During the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo and the subsequent agreement drafted between Seeckt and Rosenblatt, the political situation in Germany was still unstable. Therefore, Seeckt's involvement in these negotiations could be seen as a sort of political time bomb. The resulting military collaboration was not only a direct violation of the Treaty of Versailles, but also a threat to Seeckt's career. Both right-wing and left-wing political groups in Germany would be unsympathetic to negotiations with

the Soviets, regardless of their advantages, and disclosure of such talks would further threaten the stability of the Weimar Republic. These negotiations also required Seeckt to ignore his own nationalistic ideology, revealing the degree of benefit that he hoped to gain. Yet Seeckt believed so strongly that these relations were necessary for Germany that he was willing to risk serious repercussions.

With this newly acquired knowledge of aircraft, gasses, and tanks, a fundamental flaw in Seeckt's manuals surfaced. Though each discussed tactical reform, none included these new weapons of war. This was due not to oversight by Seeckt, however, but because these weapon systems were illegal at the time of publication. As such, he did not devote large sections of his manuals to these weapons (although he did discuss defensive measures against them). As a result, the *Reichswehr* needed a new training manual, one that discussed the offensive capabilities of aircraft and tanks in particular. In 1933, Colonel General Ludwig Beck (and others) authored a new doctrinal manual for Germany: *Truppenführung* (Troop Leadership). Eventually published in two volumes, *Truppenführung* served to update Seeckt's manuals with discussions of armored warfare and air power.

The beginning chapters of *Truppenführung* examined command and leadership within the army. According to this new manual, numerically inferior forces could wage effective war if squads combined effective leadership with weapons in good condition.¹¹⁹ Adopting Seeckt's doctrine, Beck believed that uncertainty always exists in war and that commanders must learn to make confident decisions before having fully assessed the situation. In order to accomplish this, commanders gave their subordinate officers "freedom of action, so long as it does not

adversely affect his overall intent.”¹²⁰ This idea of freedom and flexibility is a clear continuation of *Stosstrupp* tactics, which Seeckt repeatedly stressed in his own doctrine.

Another important topic in *Truppenführung* is the utilization of terrain. Like in Seeckt’s manuals, commanding officers were to give concise oral orders based on terrain, affording subordinates the opportunity to ask relevant questions.¹²¹ As a result, these orders were delivered more quickly than those requiring a map. In addition, objectives were less incremental, allowing troops to maintain momentum more effectively.¹²²

The main focus of *Truppenführung* was that of combined arms, in which the goal was to support the backbone of the army: the infantry. In agreement with Seeckt, Beck asserted that heavy weapons (machine-guns, mortars, mine-throwers, and so on) should always support advancing infantry.¹²³ This idea of combined arms reappeared in volume two, when Beck introduced chapters relating to tanks and airplanes. The infantry was to protect the tanks as they advanced, and airplanes were to act as close fire support for the tanks.¹²⁴ In Beck’s view, there was no rigid structure that stated which branches could support other branches; instead he maintained that “the individual arms must augment each other based on their capabilities and the nature of the terrain.”¹²⁵

Although *Truppenführung* did introduce new tactics, the core was not unlike the manuals that General Seeckt produced ten years earlier. General Seeckt’s influence in military affairs continued after his time as *Chef der Heeresleitung*, as his ideas became manifest in *Truppenführung* and thus the *Wehrmacht*. The Second World War saw the advent of a war of movement, where troops carefully maneuvered around the battlefield and avoided the stagnation of trench warfare. The difference in warfare was due largely to the innovations of

the interwar period, as pioneered by General Hans von Seeckt. His innovations ensured the advancement of the army despite the severe restrictions levied by the Treaty of Versailles. The reformation of the *Reichswehr* realistically occurred in three stages: a vision, provided in his training manuals; implementation, documented in his observations; and continuation, guaranteed by *Truppenführung*. Seeckt's reformations molded the army into a highly efficient weapon, wedded to a doctrine of independent leadership, effective use of terrain, and increased cooperation. His political dealings with Russia procured vital training for his soldiers with modern weapons and technology, and his tactics were adapted into the operational doctrine of the *Wehrmacht*, ensuring his lasting influence within the German military. Overall, Seeckt sought to create an apolitical entity capable of serving the future leaders of Germany. Given the later successes of the Nazi war machine, it can be confidently asserted that General Hans von Seeckt effectively reformed the German army, building a mobile force governed by superior tactical doctrine.

¹ Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005), 301.

² Eric D. Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promises and Tragedy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), 13.

³ Lillian Goldman Law Library, "Part V," *The Versailles Treaty June 28, 1919*, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/partv.asp> (accessed March 16, 2013).

⁴ Weitz, 33.

⁵ Although *Reichswehr* literally translates as "Reich Defense" and means the summation of the German military forces, it is commonly used interchangeably with *Reichsheer* (Reich Army,) the actual army of Germany; this paper will continue this accepted notation.

⁶ Robert Citino, *The Path to Blitzkrieg: Doctrine and Training in the German Army, 1920-1939* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1999).

⁷ Matthias Strohn, "Hans von Seeckt and His Vision of a 'Modern Army'," *War in History* vol. 12 no. 3 (2005): 318-337.

⁸ MacGregor Knox, *To the Threshold of Power, 1922/33: Origins and Dynamics of the Fascist and National Socialist Dictatorships* vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁹ Weitz; Erich Eyck, *A History of the Weimar Republic*, trans. Harlan P. Hanson and Robert G. Waite (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962).

¹⁰ Hans W. Gatzke, "Russo-German Military Collaboration during the Weimar Republic," *The American Historical Review* vol. 63, no. 3 (April, 1958): 565-597, <http://jstor.org/stable/1848881> (accessed December 15, 2012); George W. F. Hallgarten, "General Hans von Seeckt and Russia, 1920-1922," *The Journal of Modern History* vol. 21, no. 1 (March, 1949): 28-34, <http://jstor.org/stable/1871084> (accessed December 15, 2012).

¹¹ Strohn, 319.

¹² Strohn, 319.

¹³ Strohn, 319.

¹⁴ *The Versailles Treaty*

¹⁵ Strohn, 320.

¹⁶ Strohn, 320.

¹⁷ Strohn, 319-320.

¹⁸ Strohn, 320.

¹⁹ Citino, 10.

²⁰ Citino, 9.

²¹ Citino, 9.

²² Eyck, 150. Louis L. Snyder, *The Weimar Republic: A History of Germany from Ebert to Hitler*, (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1966), 44-46. Weitz, 94.

²³ Weitz, 116.

²⁴ Weitz, 91.

²⁵ Harold J. Gordon Jr., *The Reichswehr and the German Republic 1919-1926* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), 274-275

²⁶ Gordon Jr., *Reichswehr*, 274-275.

²⁷ Gordon Jr., *Reichswehr*, 242.

²⁸ Hans von Seeckt, *The Political Conditions in the German Army: November 6, 1923*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XV, frames 736-738, 2-3.

²⁹ Seeckt, *Political Conditions*, 2-3.

³⁰ Seeckt, *Political Conditions*, 3.

³¹ Published in two parts: the first in 1921 and the second in 1923. This paper use's Citino's portrayal of *F.u.G.* in *Blitzkrieg* due to the rarity of this document and the difficulty of finding a copy.

³² Published in December 1921. Hans von Seeckt, *The Training of the Rifle Squad*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XIII, frames 625-655.

³³ Published in December 1921, alongside *A.d.S.* Hans von Seeckt, *Individual Training with the Light Machine Gun: The Training of the L.M.G. Section*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XIII, frames 656-683.

³⁴ Originally published in October 1922, but was later slightly revised and re-published in 1925. Hüttmann, *Tactics of the Infantry, on the Basis of the New Training Regulations for the Infantry of Oct. 26, 1922*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XI, frames 277-352).

³⁵ Citino, 21.

³⁶ Citino, 20-21.

³⁷ Citino, 22.

³⁸ Citino, 12.

³⁹ Hull, 301-302.

⁴⁰ Citino, 16.

⁴¹ Citino, 18.

⁴² Citino, 18.

⁴³ Seeckt, *A.d.S.*, 1-2.

⁴⁴ Seeckt, *A.d.S.*, 17-18.

⁴⁵ Seeckt, *A.d.S.*, 17.

⁴⁶ Hans von Seeckt, *The Remarks of the German Chief of the Army Command Based on His Inspections during 1921*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XV, frames 73-150, 3-4.

⁴⁷ Seeckt, *A.d.S.*, 14, 21.

⁴⁸ Seeckt, *A.d.S.*, 20.

⁴⁹ Seeckt, *A.d.S.*, 2.

⁵⁰ Seeckt, *A.L.M.G.*, 1

⁵¹ Seeckt, *A.L.M.G.*, 1.

⁵² Seeckt, *A.L.M.G.*, 6, 20.

⁵³ Seeckt, *A.L.M.G.*, 15-19.

⁵⁴ Hüttmann, 17.

⁵⁵ Hüttmann, 24.

⁵⁶ Hüttmann, 12-17.

⁵⁷ Hüttmann, 15.

⁵⁸ Hüttmann, 28.

⁵⁹ Citino, 25-26.

⁶⁰ Hüttmann, 12.

⁶¹ Hüttmann, 27.

⁶² Hüttmann, 28.

⁶³ Hüttmann, 19.

⁶⁴ Seeckt, *Remarks 1921*, 1.

⁶⁵ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 2.

⁶⁶ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 9.

⁶⁷ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 3.

⁶⁸ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 3-4.

⁶⁹ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 1.

⁷⁰ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 1.

⁷¹ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 10.

⁷² Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 2.

⁷³ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 3. He also wrote that “the various branches of the service must become acquainted with each other.” 2.

⁷⁴ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 5-6 and 10- 14.

⁷⁵ Seeckt, *Remarks* 1921, 5.

⁷⁶ Hans von Seeckt, *Comments of the Commanding General of the German Army in Regard to His Inspections in 1922*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XV, frames 539-624, 1.

⁷⁷ Seeckt, *Comments* 1922, 2, 6.

⁷⁸ Seeckt, *Comments* 1922, 17.

⁷⁹ Seeckt, *Comments* 1922, 16, 22.

⁸⁰ Seeckt, *Comments* 1922, 21.

⁸¹ Seeckt, *Comments* 1922, 26.

⁸² Seeckt, *Comments of the Commanding General of the German Army regarding His Inspections in 1923*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XV, frames 807-846, 2.

⁸³ Snyder, 51-53.

⁸⁴ Seeckt, *Comments* 1923, 2.

⁸⁵ Seeckt, *Comments* 1923, 3.

⁸⁶ Citino, 11.

⁸⁷ Seeckt, *Comments* 1923, 3.

⁸⁸ Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 2.

⁸⁹ Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 5.

⁹⁰ Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 12.

⁹¹ Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 4, 11.

⁹² Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 11.

⁹³ Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 21.

⁹⁴ Seeckt, *Comments 1923*, 22.

⁹⁵ Hans von Seeckt, *Observations of the Chief of the Army Command on the Basis of His Inspections in 1924*, in *United States Military Intelligence Reports: Germany, 1919-1941* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983), microfilm reel XV, frames 151-180, 9.

⁹⁶ Seeckt, *Observations 1924*, 1.

⁹⁷ Seeckt, *Observations 1924*, 8.

⁹⁸ Seeckt, *Observations 1924*, 9-10.

⁹⁹ *The Versailles Treaty*.

¹⁰⁰ *The Versailles Treaty*.

¹⁰¹ Hallgarten, 30.

¹⁰² Eyck, 205.

¹⁰³ Eyck, 223; Hallgarten, 30.

¹⁰⁴ Hallgarten, 31; Eyck, 205; Gordon H. Mueller, "Rapallo Reexamined: A New Look at Germany's Secret Military Collaboration with Russia in 1922," *Military Affairs* vol. 40, no. 3 (October, 1976): 110, <http://jsotr.org/stable/1986524> (accessed April 7, 2013).

¹⁰⁵ Hallgarten, 31.

¹⁰⁶ Hallgarten, 31.

¹⁰⁷ Hallgarten, 32.

¹⁰⁸ Hallgarten, 32; Mueller, 113.

¹⁰⁹ Yuri Dyakov and Tatyana Busheyeva, eds. and trans, Introduction to *The Red Army and the Wehrmacht: How the Soviets Militarized Germany, 1922-1933, and Paved the Way for Fascism*, (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1995), 17.

¹¹⁰ Hallgarten, 32.

¹¹¹ "LIPETSK" in Dyakov and Busheyeva, eds. and trans., 150-153.

¹¹² *Report of Berzin to Voroshilov: About Results of the Work in Kazan, Lipetsk, Tomka* in Dyakov and Busheyeva, eds. and trans., 187-189.

¹¹³ Unshlikht to Stalin, December 31, 1926, in Dyakov and Busheyeva, eds. and trans., 59-62.

¹¹⁴ "LIPETSK", 150-153.

¹¹⁵ *Berzin Report: "On Cooperation of WPRA and the Reichswehr"* in Dyakov and Busheyeva, eds. and trans., 68-75.

¹¹⁶ *Berzin Report*, 68-75.

¹¹⁷ *The Main Treaty Between VIKO-MOSKVA and KA-MOSKVA About Tank School Organization* in Dyakov and Busheyeva, eds. and trans., 167-170.

¹¹⁸ *Unshlikht to Stalin and Berzin Report*, 59-62, 68-75.

¹¹⁹ Bruce Condell and David T. Zabecki, eds. and trans., *On the German Art of War: Truppenführung* (Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 2009), 18-22.

¹²⁰ Condell, 23-24.

¹²¹ Condell, 29-30, 40.

¹²² Condell, 92.

¹²³ Condell, 92-94.

¹²⁴ Condell, 96-97.

¹²⁵ Condell, 126.

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